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NECKER ISLAND WINS \$300,000 BET ON SUNSHINE AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Nov. 6, 2021) – **The Scherr Boys' Necker Island**, who finished ninth in last year's Kentucky Derby, narrowly prevailed in a three-horse photo for the win in Saturday's 13th running of the \$300,000 Bet On Sunshine at Churchill Downs to beat **Mucho** by a head with **Sir Alfred James** another neck back in third.

Ridden by **Mitchell Murrill** for trainer **Chris Hartman**, Necker Island ran six furlongs in 1:09.22 over a fast track to give the jockey and conditioner their third win together on the 11-race program.

It was Necker Island's first career stakes win, but he has proven fruitful for owner **Wayne Scherr** after he and other partners claimed the horses for \$100,000 on June 13, 2020. Since then, Necker Island finished third in the \$300,000 Indiana Derby (GIII) and \$200,000 Ellis Park Derby, which led to a start in the 2020 Kentucky Derby. This was his third victory in seven starts this year.

The win was worth \$183,450 and improved Necker Island's career earnings to \$565,532 with a record of 5-1-4 in 18 starts.

Necker Island returned \$9.40, \$4.20 and \$3.20 as the 7-2 third betting choice. Mucho, the 5-2 favorite under **Rey Gutierrez**, paid \$3.40 and \$3.20. Sir Alfred James, ridden by **John McKee**, paid \$5 to show. **Bango**, **Long Weekend** and **Atoka** completed the order of finish.

Sir Alfred James and **Rough Entry** battled for the early lead in the field of eight older horses through a first quarter mile in :21.66 as Necker Island raced in fifth along the inside. Necker Island had to check in entering the turn as Sir Alfred James and Mucho left the turn vying for the lead in :45.01. Necker Island continued to race along the rail, wore down those rivals and got up at the wire.

"I saw there was a lot of speed in this race so I wanted to let my horse settle," Murrill said. "He settled very well up the backside and I had a lot of horse turning for home. I'm really proud of his effort and the Hartman team did a great job getting him ready."

The race was spoiled by an incident on the turn when **Vertical Threat**, ridden by **Adam Beschizza**, and Rough Entry, with **Brian Hernandez Jr.** up, fell. Both jockeys walked to the onsite ambulance and were examined onsite by EMTs. Rough Entry was corralled by the outriders. Vertical Threat was vanned off.

Necker Island is a 4-year-old son of Hard Spun out of the Mr. Greeley mare Jenny's Rocket and was bred in Kentucky by **Stonestreet Stables**.

Racing at Churchill Downs continues Sunday with a 10-race card that begins at 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). Sunday is **Military Appreciation Day** with free admission or a discounted \$29 ticket to Skye Terrace for active and retired members of the U.S. armed services.

BET ON SUNSHINE QUOTES

Mitchell Murrill, jockey of NECKER ISLAND (winner): "I saw there was a lot of speed in this race so I wanted to let my horse settle. He settled very well up the backside and I had a lot of horse turning for home. I'm really proud of his effort and the Hartman team did a great job getting him ready."

Chris Hartman, trainer of NECKER ISLAND (winner): "We were working to getting this horse back to sprints. I knew he was sharp enough to run a big effort today. Mitch gave him an exceptional ride and he really showed a great effort."

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